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DIRECTORATE OF
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DIA and DOS review(s) completed.

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EASTERN EUROPE



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Czechoslovakia-USSR: (Information as of 2300 EDT)

The talks between the Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders continued well into the night yesterday, a sign that an agreement may be imminent.

As of 0630 Moscow time, TASS had not published the expected communiqué on yesterday's talks, suggesting that consultations may have continued all night.

[redacted] Prime Minister Cernik, a member of the delegation in Moscow [redacted] "the most important questions" were being discussed. In an effort to reassure those Czechoslovaks who have been urging the delegation to return in order to get a firsthand account of the occupation, Cernik added that the delegation was aware of the situation at home and was striving for an early conclusion to the negotiations.

In Czechoslovakia, tension between the people and the occupation forces remained unabated, although fewer incidents of violence were reported than in previous days. Czechoslovak workers staged another 15-minute strike to demonstrate their opposition to the take-over. Loyalist authorities, however, apparently are concerned over the prospect of a general strike. The government, parliament, and trade unions addressed a joint appeal to the nation, warning that any strike action of more than a few minutes' duration would cause "immense harm" to the country.

In the capital, Soviet military equipment was somewhat less in evidence than before, although troop strengths there are believed to have remained unchanged. Last night, for no apparent reason, Soviet troops vacated the building housing the government presidium. The US Embassy comments that the attitude of most Prague citizens now is one of resignation to the presence of the occupation troops.]

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[Collaborators, possibly with Soviet connivance, have been appealing to Slovak nationalism in an effort to breach the almost solid front of Czechoslovak resistance. Although the Slovak party central committee reportedly denounced a proposal to proclaim a separate Slovak state two days ago, a loyalist radio station in Slovakia reports "independence" demonstrations are to be held today. The station denounced these plans as "obvious provocations," and expressed the hope that no one would participate.

In a possibly related move, the Slovak party congress convened yesterday, although it had earlier been put off until Czechoslovak party leader Dubcek's return. The last minute decision to hold the congress as scheduled may have been taken in order to strip authority away from first secretary Bilak, a member of the delegation in Moscow and a conservative opponent of Dubcek. The report of the first day's proceedings stressed that the competence of the central committee, of which Bilak is the head, ceases once the congress is in session.

Soviet commentary on developments in Czechoslovakia has become not only increasingly defensive but also somewhat more threatening in tone. Arguing that the pervasive and unrelenting resistance proves the existence of an anti-Socialist plot, Pravda admits that the situation remains "complex and tense," a gloomier description than the earlier hints that things were not going as well as they might. Soviet commentators, increasingly virulent in defending the Soviet-sponsored "rescue mission," maintain that it has separated the "true fighters against imperialism" from those who merely pay lip service to that struggle. The commentators also point out that those who question the Soviet action--Rumania and Yugoslavia in particular--are following the line of the "imperialists."

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[Troops from the western USSR are probably reinforcing Soviet elements in northwest Czechoslovakia. A Soviet convoy seen on 25 August in southern East Germany heading toward the Czechoslovak border apparently came from the USSR instead of from the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany. In the convoy were many civilian trucks that had been converted for military use. These vehicles were probably called up during the recent "rear services" exercise in the western USSR.

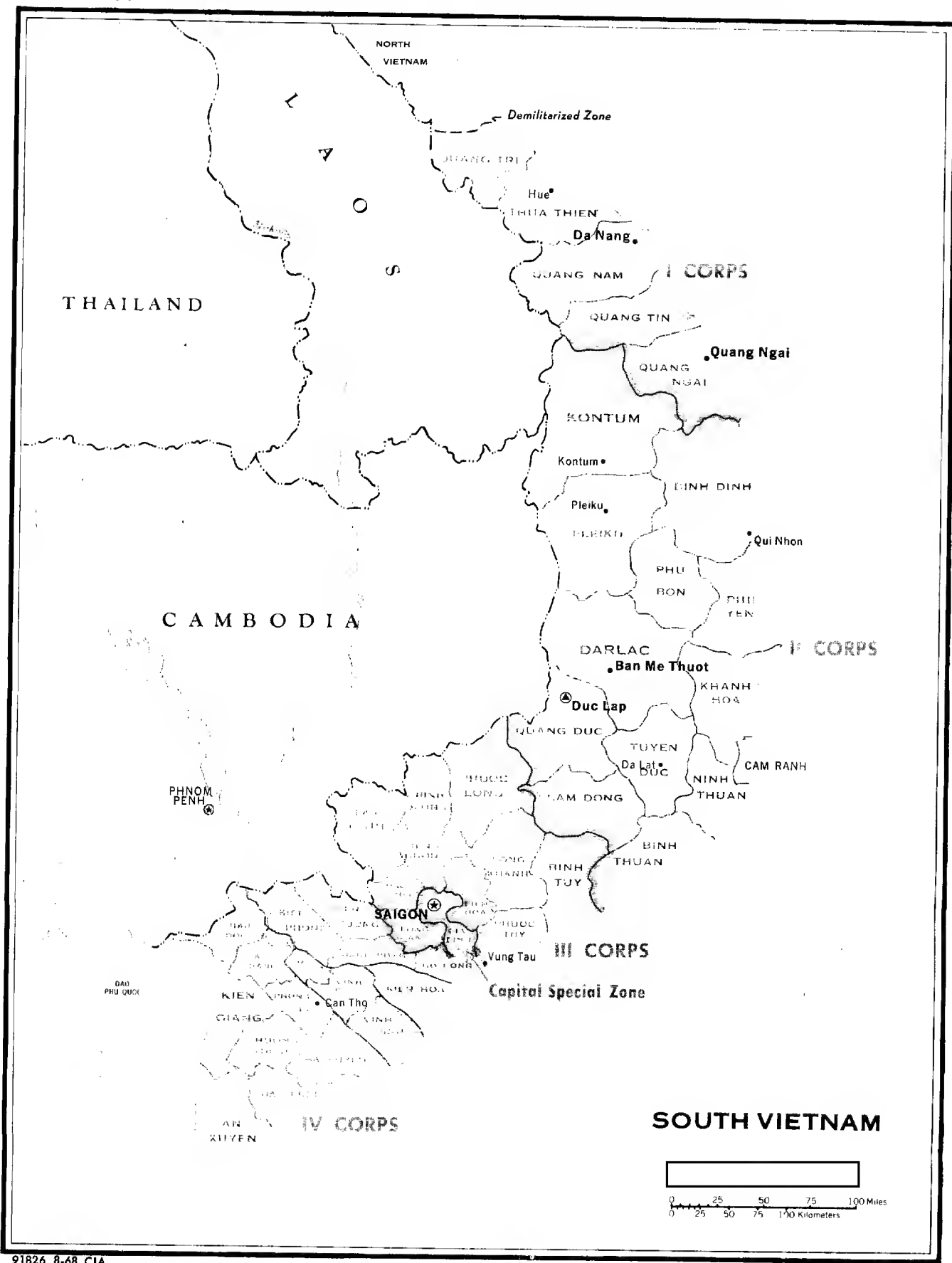
On 26 August, [] reported that the Soviet troops which initially occupied Prague were being replaced by "occupation or rear guard units." These new units have a higher proportion of young troops, who appear "jumpy" and "nervous" while patrolling. He also said the estimates of occupation troops in Prague may go as high as 80,000 to 90,000 rather than the 50,000 originally estimated. The higher figure reflects a reassessment of Soviet strength rather than an augmentation of occupation troops in Prague. [] (Map)]

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South Vietnam: Some sharp fighting continues, but the over-all level of enemy offensive activity has eased.

In the I Corps area, action continues to be centered along the coast from Da Nang to Quang Ngai city. Allied reaction forces have inflicted very heavy casualties on some enemy elements attempting to position for attacks in this sector, and this appears to have upset Communist offensive plans.

The enemy threat to the allied base at Duc Lap in southwestern II Corps has lessened considerably. Allied forces appear to be in full control of the post. Several enemy regiments are still positioned around the town of Ban Me Thuot to the north, however, and there continue to be indications that a major assault is planned against it.

In the III Corps area, there are increasing indications that sizable Communist forces may be attempting to move toward Saigon. Sharp fighting continues along some of the traditional infiltration corridors to the city from the northwest, with the enemy trying to open the way for the movement of major units.

Only a few of the Communist main force units have so far been identified in the fighting throughout the country, which has been carried on largely by local forces and specialized elements. Although over-all Communist casualties have been heavy, the bulk of main force combat power is still available for action.

[REDACTED] the
Communists decided at their last major strategy
conference in South Vietnam in June to be more cau-
tious and deliberate in the use of manpower in up-
coming offensive phases. [REDACTED] is]

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[borne out by recent captured documents which indicate that the strategy of the "general offensive and general uprising" has been confirmed by the enemy high command, but that the troops should understand it to be a possibly long drawn out process consisting of numerous offensive waves designed to coincide with diplomatic maneuver. (Map)]

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Italy-France: The Communist parties in both countries remain firm in their censure of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

The French party's attack is its first public reproof of Moscow. Expressions of opposition to Moscow include a turnout of the entire party leadership at the Rumanian National Day Celebration and messages of sympathy from all party cells to the Czechoslovak Embassy in Paris. The French party doubtless believes that to maintain its standing with the non-Communist left and more broadly with the electorate it must demonstrate its independence from Moscow on the Czechoslovak issue.

The Italian party's strong stand is in sharp contrast to the position it adopted at the time of the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956. Then, despite criticism, the party supported "the grievous necessity" of Soviet intervention.

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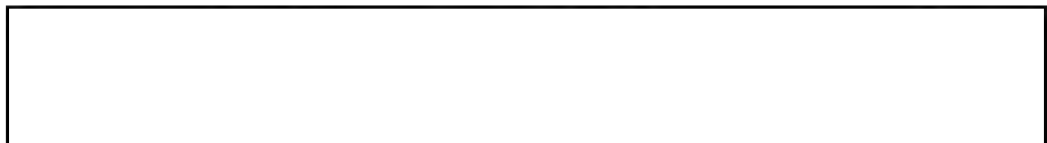
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NATO: The occupation of Czechoslovakia has provoked concern over some Alliance procedures and may bring pressure for an extension of the North Atlantic Treaty.

The West Germans are particularly anxious, pointing to the presence of massive Soviet and East European forces in Czechoslovakia and to the jamming of the early warning radar system in Bavaria. They have called for a review of the present warning time concept, which they have long regarded as inadequate to meet Alliance security needs. The North Atlantic Council has asked the NATO military committee to examine the problem.



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The Italians and the West Germans have announced they would further delay signing the non-proliferation treaty (NPT), both citing the Czech situation as the reason.

Both have expressed concern that NATO security guarantees could evaporate with the NPT still in effect. According to the treaty a NATO member may cease to be a party to it after it has been in effect for 20 years (August 1969) and after giving one year's notice.



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Argentina: President Ongania has strengthened his position by replacing army commander in chief General Julio Alsogaray.

Alsogaray, a leader of the "liberal" faction in the government, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is unlikely to generate sufficient military support to resist his ouster. His replacement, General Alejandro Lanusse, is expected to take over today. He is considered much more malleable than Alsogaray, and--like the two other new service chiefs, who will take over in October--is a supporter of Ongania.

Thus, Ongania will have lined up the military more solidly in his own camp. There is no indication, however, that he plans to change the present liberal-supported economic reform program or shift his policies toward the "nationalist" faction that is promoting development of a corporate state.

[REDACTED]

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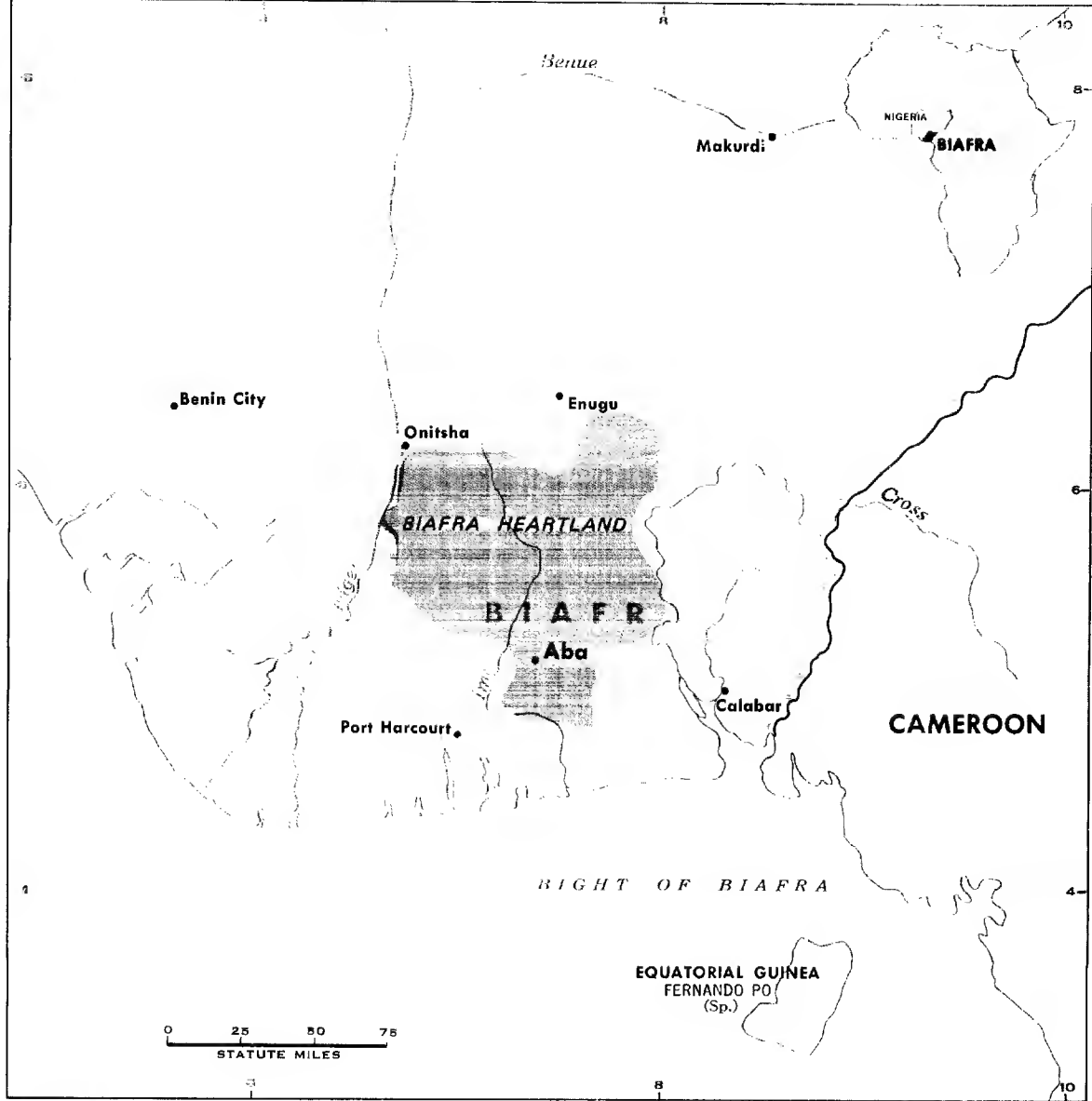
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NOTES

Turkey-USSR: Student groups protesting Soviet actions in Czechoslovakia twice forced the early closing of the Soviet pavilion at the Izmir trade fair last week. Soviet officials have reportedly threatened to close their display completely if the demonstrations do not cease. The present volatile mood of the students and other demonstrators of varied political leanings will probably not have dissipated by the time the first visiting US Navy personnel arrive in Izmir for a courtesy call by ships of the Sixth Fleet scheduled for 29 August - 9 September. [REDACTED]

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Algeria: The government is expected to release "within a few days" the Israeli aircraft hijacked by Palestinian terrorists on 23 July, as well as the remaining crew members and passengers, according to the Italian Foreign Ministry. A non-Israeli crew will fly the plane--which has been readied by an Air France crew--to Rome. This problem, which has been acutely discomfiting to Algiers, seems likely to be resolved before the African foreign ministers meet in Algiers early next month. [REDACTED]

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Nigeria: The two-week-old federal offensive into the Biafran heartland from the south has reached within a few miles of Aba, an important administrative center, but press reports of the "fall" of that city appear premature. Federal progress has been retarded by logistic problems, heavy rains, and stubborn Biafran resistance. The Biafran effort to stem the federal drive could be significantly assisted if reports are true that some 300 French mercenaries recently passed through Gabon on their way to Biafra. [REDACTED]
(Map)

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Cuba: Fidel Castro has stated explicitly that there is no possibility of a rapprochement with the US now. During his speech on the Czech crisis on 23 August, Castro said that Cuba will not initiate negotiations and will not consent to talks with the US as long as the latter is "a government which represents the bulwark of reaction in the world." These firmly expressed sentiments and Castro's vow not to be frightened by any US threats may work to end recent rumors in Latin America of a possible Cuba-US understanding. [REDACTED]

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